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Branch of Service: United States Army; retired Sergeant First Class (SFC)

Years of Service: 23 years

Education: Master of Science Management in Human Resource Management & Bachelors of Science in Business Management (UMUC)

How did you learn about NASA? “Space the Final Frontier, these are the voyages of the starship Enterprise; its five year mission, to seek out new life and new civilizations, to boldly go where no man has gone before” (Star Trek, 1966). I, just as many others, grew up with the fascination of the “StarTrek” series and still today, I continue to watch sci-fi and keep up with space exploration.

What is your position and how did your military service fit into your current career? I currently work in the Office of Human Capital Management (OHCM), as a Human Resources Specialist, supporting Employee Relations and Performance Management. With my 23 years in the military, my experience has enabled me to be diverse and well-rounded in a multitude of specializations within the human resources profession. My work within various workgroups, promoting teamwork and cohesive interactions as well as my negotiating skills will help me to work as a team player and promote resolution of difficult situations.

What made you decide to go into this field? In high school, I took classes in business management. My Army recruiter and friend recommended that I try the Personnel field and I have been enjoying myself in this field ever since.

What background/education/experience was helpful in obtaining a position with NASA? My emphasis on continual learning through academia which focused on concepts, theories and practices helped develop a strong foundation. My progressively responsible duties within the Human Resources field, including my training and development background and employee relations and performance management expertise led to a perfect fit.

How was your transition from military life to your civilian career? My transition from military life to civilian started before departing from military service. The military has a program call Army Career Assistance Program (ACAP) where trained professionals assisted military personnel with their transition from military life to civilian workforce. One of the biggest challenges was transition from one culture, which was based on rank, regulations, and strict rules, to a culture based on personalities, norms, and established or previous practices. Another challenge was going from knowing what I was going to wear to work, Army Greens, to having to choose what I was going to where to work.

Any advice for soon-to-be veterans who may want to choose this career field? As a Human Resource professional the focus must be on customer service. Provide the best customer service and support to not only your internal stakeholders, but also your external stakeholders. “People First, Mission Critical, and Communication Always”...

What are your best three transition tips for soon-to-be veterans?

- 1) Take full-advantage of the military transitional assistance program. Ask questions and seek out assistance in proper resume writing, how to read to interpret job descriptions, and proper interviewing techniques.
- 2) Be open-minded and prepare for your transition. The life of the military was more disciplined, structured, and did not give a lot of room toward exceptions. The military was able to direct more actions than in the civilian workforce is geared more toward asking or requesting for those actions to be accomplished. In the civilian workforce there are those exceptions, based on the culture, environment, case law and established practices with in a given environment, and in the military everyone was governed by one set of rules.
- 3) Flexibility. Always remember that change is a necessary aspect to obtain Greatness.